Speaker Lauds Soil Conservation

A young farmer from this area has won district honors, and second place in a state public speaking contest, extolling the practical benefits of Soil Conservation. He is R. S. Stevens, Route 2, Lynchburg.

Stevens is a successful dairy man, an outstanding FFA member and winner of the Star Farmer of the South award.

He delivered his address here at the Appomattox High School recently, with county officials present as well as students. Then he went on to the state contest at Culpeper, where he won second honors.

We are glad to reprint below his address:

"Of all the gifts of nature, none is more indispensable to man than soil; yet, since the dawn of time, soils have been on the move.

"Our land and water resources are the very foundation of our great industrial and agricultural strength. They are the principal source of our wealth. Our great cities, with all their complex activities, are dependent on these resources. Our material standard of living, highest on earth, is built largely on the abundance and fruitfulness of American land and water.

"Good land is the most important factor in promoting a sound agricultural economy. Good soil, good farms, and good living naturally follow each other. It should be noted, however, that while natural fertility influences agricultural welfare, man has developed methods for greatly modifying the productivity of the soil. Today he is no longer entirely dependent on the natural fertility of the land.

"The differences in soils are reflected not only in farm income, but also in living conditions and in almost every aspect of community life. Rich, fertile lands support a healthier and more prosperous population than poor lands. Good farm land management consists of organizing and operating all of the land on the farm to yield the maximum continuous profit. All of the land is included, because non-tillable woodlands and pastures, when properly managed, produce income and provide watersheds and drainage controls.

"Only in recent years have farmers generally begun putting into practice measures for keeping their lands a t a high level of productivity. In the past, the huge tracts of fertile lands in the United States encouraged some men to literally mine the fertility from the soil and after its exhaustion to move on to new lands. Now we are faced with the problem of reclaiming this poorly managed land and bringing it back to profitable production levels.

"The greatest progress made in conservation in our generation has been the growing recognition of its basic relation to human welfare—the broadening of horizons and the scope of operations and goals of the organizations working in the conservation vineyard. The landowners of Virginia have shown much interest in soil and water conservation and are making progress in keeping the farmlands of the commonwealth in good, productive condition to meet the requirements of their country in war and peace—and properly preserved for future generations. Using the facilities of their districts, they are protecting the very base of their own and the nation's prosperity.

"Located in the Southern Piedmont section of Virginia, which embraces that portion of the state more susceptible to erosion, is the Robert E. Lee Soil Conservation District, my home district. It was organized in July, 1940, and is made up of Amherst, Appomattox, Buckingham, Campbell, and Cumberland counties. Since its organization, the district has attempted to reduce soil and water losses on the farmlands of the district by bringing to bear every force available to do this job. The Soil Conservation Service has made personnel available to us since the organization of the district, and these trained technicians prepare farm plans which are drawn up into Federal-District cooperative agreements.

Robert E. Lee Soil District

There were 92 new cooperators in 1955 who started conservation plans. This brings the total of cooperating farmers to 2,067 with 389,572 acres of land under conservation plan. Work has continued on such measures as tree planting, roadbank stabilization, sod waterways, and stabilization of badly eroded areas which produce silt. The first floodwater retarding structure was designated, easements obtained, and construction begun. Engineering work was also started on the second floodwater retarding structure and was ready to construct early in 1956.

"The farmers within the five-county area are well aware of the forestry assistance program available to them. The cooperation of the Soil Conservation Service technicians and soil conservation district has made it possible for the Forest Service to reach more landowners. Cooperation of this nature between allied agencies is especially beneficial to the landowners concerned and providd an impetus to conservation work. There are 603 cooperating farmers in the district that received wildlife planting materials. The seed distributed, if planted according to instruction, was sufficient to have planted about 350 acres.

Annual Tour

"The Annual Farmer - Banker Tour was held with approximately 250 people attending the tour and remaining for dinner and an evening program. A conservation Poster Contest was sponsored in the district and the entires were made at the Lynchburg Farm Show. Conservation Week was participated in by all the counties in the district, and the program this year was on a county basis. Newspaper articles and radio and television programs were put on with agencies cooperating to make this a very successful activity. Several ministers throughout the district preached sermons on soil stewardship. The district continued 100 per cent membership in the National Association of Soil Conservation Districts.

"Liming and fertilizing recommendations are finding greater application on an increasing number of add Soil cons. story . . . . . of farms of this Southern Piedmont District as a result of the district program. Proper application of these materials is enabling a larger number of farmers to grow legumes and grasses successfully in rotations, pastures, and permanent hay crops. In bringing Va. acres to a correct land use program, the unproductive and eroded borders of many fields adjacent to woods are now doing a multiple duty job. These areas, when properly prepared and sown, become an important source of food and cover for many species of the wildlife family. They also serve as drainage areas for rows emptying into them and are often used as farm roads and as turning places for farm machinery. The district has assisted hundreds of farmers in the establishment of these wildlife borders.

"The use of winter cover crops has been greatly increased by developing rotations that include small grains, grasses, and legumes. The district supervisors are also urging the use of cover crops where shorter rotations are followed and where a cover crop is not normally provided. Over the past six or seven years, conservation work of this kind has definitely proved its value time and again in many problem areas throughout the district. Almost without exception, the farms that have received a full treatment, a coordinated application of various adaptable control measures, for soil and water conservation are now losing much less soil and water than before. In a significantly large number of instances, the erosion problem has been eliminated almost entirely.

Improves Farm Living

"Conservation farming has produced a variety of important benefits. While bringing erosion under control, hundreds of farmers taking part in the Soil Conservation Service program have at the same time reorganized their whole farm enterprise on a more stable economic basis. Many who used to devote practically all their land and all their energies to the production of financially undependable cash crops such as wheat or tobacco are now supplying more of their home needs from the products of their own acres. They are developing gardens, raising poultry, and livestock, taking better care of their woods, and bringing idle lands into productive use. The net result of erosion, control and water, conservation work on farm after farm has been a better diversified, more self-sufficient, and more generally profitable type of agriculture.

"My home farm has been in our family for well over 150 years. While at one time it was larger, its present acreage is approximately 175 acres. It has supported many generations and until a few years ago stood in mute evidence of that fact. Because of the perpetual crops of corn, wheat, and tobacco, much of its fertility had been depleted, and the ravages of erosion had taken their toll. I can well remember, in my own time, when as much as three acres of ground would be left in a field, unfallowed, because it was too poor to raise a crop. I can remember when we had numerous acres that would not produce the proverbial "hen nest grass," to say nothing of a crop. I recall on two specific occasions, when because of their depth, we were able to bury dead animals in gullies without digging a "spade full." Acres and acres of land had to be cultivated in order to produce a sufficient yield, capable of supporting a meager herd of livestock. Initiated by my late father, we have undetaken to rebuild those depleted fields and have begun an ambitious program of soil conservation. The first phase of our conservation activities emphasized chiefly the development of a system of crop rotations, including legumes, the use of fertilizers, lime and manure, the renovation and seeding of permanent pastures, the seeding of waterways, the drainage of swamps, the selective cutting of timber and, most important of all, the ample application of some good 'common sense.'

"In the last eight years, we have applied an average of 350 loads of manure and 50 tons of fertilizer per year. During one year alone we

(Continued on Page 15)

JUST TO SAY,
"Merry Christmas"
AND
"Thank You"
FOR YOUR FRIENDLY PATRONAGE DURING THE PAST YEAR
Guill's Esso Service
And Dining Room
Route 24 Appomattox, Va.

GREETINGS
Here's hoping that all the joys of this Holiday season will be yours in fullest measure... and that the New Year will be richly rewarding in warm friendships, good health and happiness.
CHRISTMAS MENUS — ENJOY OUR FINE FOOD
MAUD'S HOT SHOP
ROUTE 460 ONE MILE WEST OF APPOMATTOX

As you worship in the Church of your choice, may Christmas bring you the most precious gift of all... peace and contentment. And may the spirit of Him whose birth we celebrate abide with you now and throughout the coming year. May all the true joys of Christmas be yours.
Nehi Bottling Company
LYNCHBURG, VIRGINIA

Washington Notes

V. A. SCHOOL AID

Up to the end of October, 4,300 young men and women had applied to the Veterans Administration for war orphans schooling benefits. The V. A. said it expected applications under the new law to reach 10,000 to 15,000 by next summer.

BUMPER BABY CROP

The Public Health Service has said that it looks as though 1956 will be a banner year for babies in the United States. About 11,500 are arriving daily. If the rate continues to the end of the year, a total of 4,202,000 births will have been recorded. That would be 111,000 more than were estimated to have arrived in 1955.

INTEREST

The nation's insured commercial banks have been given permission to raise the interest they pay on savings deposits from two and a half to three per cent, effective Jan. 1. The object of the increase is to help the commercial banks to attract more depositors in the current period of "tight" or "hard-to-borrow" money.

CREDIT BUYING

Credit buying by the public in October set a new record. Total consumer credit went up by $122,000,000 to $40,200,000,000. This was almost four billion dollars greater than a year ago.

COLLEGE STUDENTS

A record number of students other than veterans were enrolled in the nation's colleges and universities in the 1953-54 school year, according to the Federal Office of Education. The total of all students for that session was 2,555,000. This was 140,000 fewer than in the 1949-50 session, but it excluded a record 2,180,843 non-veteran students.

INAUGURAL BALL

Tickets for President Eisenhower's second inaugural ball will cost $15 apiece—$3 more than four years ago. The Jan. 21 ball will be held in four sections — at three hotels and the National Guard Armory. There will be no public sale of ball tickets and only those receiving invitations from the committee will be entitled to pay $15 each — or $30 a couple— for tickets. Boxes of eight seats would cost $500.

COTTON EXPORTS

It seems that the Government's new cotton export policy is paying off. So far this season, more cotton has moved abroad than during the same period last year and, for the full season, which will end next July 31, exports are expected to be above 6,500,000 bales, compared with 2,215,060 last season.

SCHOOL OUTLOOK

Mounting enrollments, plus a shortage of qualified teachers and classrooms are depriving at least 840,000 children of fulltime schooling this year, according to the National Education Association. The estimated enrollment of public school children in the current school year is 32,338,688. This is 1,197,350 more than the estimated enrollment last year.

RETAILING

In the seven years between 1948 and 1955, the number of retail establishments rose from 1,763,000 to 1,865,000, a gain of a little more than 100,000. But, during these years, 1,052,000 retailers went into business and 991,200 went out. At the same time, 2,067,400 retail businesses changed hands.

PENSIONS FOR WOMEN

During the first week of December, about 300,000 women under 65 years of age began receiving Federal old-age and survivor's insurance checks from the Social Security Administration. Amendments passed by Congress this year permit payments at age 62, at reduced rates, to eligible wives and retired women workers and at full rates to widows and mothers of deceased insured workers.

Solution

"For years," said the little woman, "I didn't know where my husband spent his evenings. One night I got home early, and there he was." —Golden Gates.

HARSHBARGER NAMED PRESIDENT OF BIOMETRIC SOCIETY REGION

Dr. Boyd Harshbarger, head of the department of statistics at VPI is the new president of the Eastern North American region of the Biometric Society.

The region covers all of the United States and Canada from east of the Rocky Mountains, and Mexico and Central America, and has over 4,000 members.

The Biometric Society sponsors the journal "Biometrics," and is an international organization with members in every country in the world. The region of which Dr. Harshbarger is president is the largest in membership. Meetings of the society are held throughout the world.

Subscription rate: $2.00 a year; payable in advance.

These Political Days

It isn't what the voter stands for nearly as much as it is what he falls for. —Pathfinder.

To you, our friends and patrons, we extend every good wish for a happy holiday season, with our sincere thanks for the privilege of serving you over the years.
Haley's Store
WALLACE HALEY, Prop.
Appomattox, Virginia

Laundry - Dry Cleaners
Dial 2711 - Appomattox

We're coming your way with best wishes for a happy holiday and many thanks for your patronage.
Parkway
Service Station
J. A. CONNER, Prop.
Route 24 Appomattox, Va.

Here they are! The season's best wishes to all our wonderful friends. May you enjoy to the fullest every minute of this glorious holiday.
J. E. SEARS & CO.
INCORPORATED
"EVERYTHING TO BUILD ANYTHING"
Lynchburg — Appomattox

To all of you, whose friendship and loyalty have made this such a happy season for us, we send our warmest Holiday Greetings... and a sincere wish that the New Year may prove memorable for the many joys that it will bring to you and yours.
Greetings
Sunny Harwood
Herbert Richardson
Tom Coleman
Thelma Caldwell
Jake Shuford
Joel Martin
Dick Bass
Henery Chernault
Ray Ferguson
Kermit Campbell
Robert Morris
Fleming Drinkard
Charlie Mitchell
Mike Godsey
Virgil Fleshman (Col.)
Appomattox Hardware Company, Inc.
DIAL 3131 APPOMATTOX, VA.